

TOWN OF AMHERST

REQUEST FOR MUNICIPAL SOFTWARE PROPOSALS

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Proposals from municipal software vendors will be received at the Amherst Town Hall until 2:00 P.M. local prevailing time on March 16, 2012. Offerors intending to submit proposals should obtain the complete Request for Proposals document at www.amherstva.gov. **Inquiries should be via email to colan.davis@amherstva.gov, and answers will be returned via an addendum posted on the same web site.** The Town of Amherst reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Issue Date:	February 14, 2012
Pre-proposal Meeting:	February 27, 2012 - 2:00 P.M. (Town Hall)
Response Due:	March 16, 2012 - 2:00 P.M.

**Post Office Box 280
Amherst, Virginia 24521
(434)946-7885
Fax: (434)946-2087**

1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Proposals from qualified vendors will be received at the Amherst Town Hall for computer software and any associated hardware and services described herein.
- 1.2 Further general information will be supplied if it is readily available upon appointment at the Town Hall. Specific information needed by a proposer will be, if practical, supplied by a written addendum to this request for proposals.

2.0 CONTACT PERSON

- 2.1 All questions regarding the request for proposals and the evaluation process should be directed to:

Office Manager
Town of Amherst
Post Office Box 280
Amherst, Virginia 24521
colan.davis@amherstva.gov

3.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

- 3.1 Five (5) copies of each proposal must be submitted to the Office Manager's office as listed above in a sealed envelope or package by the date and time noted on the cover sheet and must be clearly marked:

SOFTWARE PROPOSAL: DO NOT OPEN

Each proposal shall contain a completed proposal summary form.

- 3.2 The Town of Amherst will not be responsible for any cost incurred by the proposer or proposers who choose to submit proposals prior to issuance of a contract.
- 3.3 Proposals will not be received after the due date and time. The date of postmark will not be considered.
- 3.4 Proposals may be withdrawn by written request from the proposer to the Office Manager prior to the closing date.
- 3.5 All proposals be signed by an individual authorized to bind the proposer company.

4.0 GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the proposer to inquire about and clarify any requirements of this request for proposals that are not understood prior to the submission deadline.
- 4.2 Any information relative to interpretation of these specifications shall be requested in writing within five (5) working days prior to the submission deadline.
- 4.3 Any interpretation made to a prospective proposer will be expressed in the form of an addendum to the specifications which will be available to all prospective proposers no later than three (3) working days before the submission deadline. Oral answers will not be authoritative.
- 4.4 No protests regarding the validity or appropriateness of the specifications or of the request for proposals will be considered unless the protest is filed in writing with the Office Manager prior to the submission deadline for proposals.
- 4.5 The Town of Amherst reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals received and/or to negotiate separately in any manner that best serves the interests of the Town of Amherst.

5.0 CONTRACTUAL BINDING

- 5.1 Each proposal will be received with the understanding that the acceptance in writing by the Town of Amherst of the proposer to furnish any or all of the services described therein shall constitute a contract between the proposer and the Town of Amherst. The contract shall bind the proposer to furnish and/or deliver the services quoted on at the prices stated and in accordance with all conditions with said accepted proposals, and the Town of Amherst on its part to order from such successful proposer except for causes beyond reasonable control and pay for at the agreed prices, goods and services specified, and delivered.

6.0 SELECTION PROCESS

- 6.1 Oral Presentations/Interviews
The Town may ask qualified, responsible, and suitable firms to attend a presentation/interview as part of the evaluation process. Only proposers deemed fully qualified, responsible, and suitable on basis of initial responses and with emphasis on professional competence to provide the required services shall be interviewed. Such proposer shall be encouraged to elaborate on his qualifications and performance data or staff expertise pertinent to the goods and services proposed, as well as alternative concepts.

6.2 Evaluation

After interviewing the selected firms, the Town will rank the interviewed firms in priority order according to the selection criteria. The highest ranking firm will be selected to negotiate a contract with the Town and competitive negotiations with that proposer will then be scheduled. Should the Town determine in writing and in its sole discretion that one proposer is more fully qualified and a price that is fair and reasonable has been negotiated, a contract may be awarded to that proposer, subject to the approval of the Amherst Town Council. (The Town Council has the authority to approve or reject any recommendation made to it under this process.) If negotiations with the first ranked proposer are not successful, negotiations will proceed with the second ranked firm and so on until such agreements can be successfully accomplished.

7.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT

7.1 Proposers should address, but need not be limited to, all performance requirements listed herein with a written proposal and should not assume that an opportunity will exist to add such matters after the proposal is submitted. Proposers will be expected to supply:

- A. A completed proposal cover sheet contained in this document.
- B. A descriptive listing of products and services proposed with itemized pricing. Vendors are advised that the Town will consider separate vendors for software/support by module and also for hardware if deemed to be in the Town's best interests.
- C. Statements addressing screening and/or selection criteria as contained in this document.
- D. A specimen vendor's contract, if any, as an attachment. Vendor should not assume that there will be an opportunity to add "standard" contract specifications after submitting the initial proposal.

7.2 Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by the proposer in connection with the procurement transaction is subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; however, the proposer must invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data and/or other materials included in this proposal and must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary.

8.0 SELECTION CRITERIA

8.1 Following are the specific selection criteria to be used for judging proposals:

- A. Firm's past experience in providing similar products and services for local governments and small businesses in the greater Amherst area. The quality of the proposer's maintenance program and ability to provide timely service will be a major factor in any award decision.
- B. Qualifications of the firm and individuals to be assigned as account representatives, primary Town contacts and actual on-site installers.
- C. Proximity of the firm to the Town and the knowledge and familiarity of the firm with the service area and the types of problems applicable to small municipal governments.
- D. Cost and ability to meet Town schedules and timetables
- E. Thoroughness, understandability and completeness of proposal

9.0 DESCRIPTION OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

9.1 Current system

The Town has a personal computer network with 5 units including a server, 3 printers, a utility meter reading device and various disk drive hardware. In addition, there are two remote units not connected to the "Town Hall" computer. Primary software includes Microsoft Office; Harris Computer Flexibill, Open Windows Financials (General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Payroll, Banking and Receipting); Property Tax; Cash Receipts; Sensus AutoRead. All units are Microsoft-compatible personal computers. A Sensus handheld meter-reading device is an integral part of the utility billing system. No system expansion is anticipated, but minor ongoing upgrades would be normal. The Town currently utilizes barcodes for utility bills and tax bills.

9.2 Problems with current system

The Town desires to upgrade its Property Tax billing and accounting system prior to the 2012 billing cycle. The Town is also concerned that its existing primary accounting software is proprietary; no adjustment can be made to the system except through the software vendor. The Town desires strong technical support for the various software and hardware. Increased flexibility, better reports, and longer history tracking of the utility billing system are desired.

9.3 Desired system

A property tax billing and collections system that could be later integrated with the following systems: utility billing/collections; cash receipts (misc. collections); general ledger/budget; payroll and accounts payable.

The software system envisioned by the Town includes the following features:

ALL COMPONENTS

Operating System – All hardware and software units should be PC/Microsoft Windows compatible.

Virus, lightning, backup schemes and other business interruption protection is needed.

SOFTWARE

Operating System – A windows-based system is preferred.

Property Tax – Any proposed tax billing software should be able to handle yearly billing of approximately 1,200 real estate tax accounts as well as 1,600 personal property tax account. The proposed software will be expected to:

- Convert data from current Harris Property Tax system
- Import and convert a “flat” data file received from the Commissioner of Revenue
- Calculate the tax, the Virginia personal property tax relief for qualified vehicles and bill a license fee to applicable vehicles
- Generate tax bills for printing on a local printer
- Receive and post payments to individual accounts, accurately accounting for overpayments/credit balances during all processing phases
- Produce accurate outstanding reports for all billing categories
- Produce general ledger booking reports to be used to manually book transactions to our current general ledger system
- Produce ad hoc reports
- Accurately handle abatements for tax, tax relief and/or license fees
- Store and retrieve original billing information such as assessment values and addresses for each year
- Write off of uncollectible accounts while maintaining history
- Accurately account for returned checks and associated fees
- Accurately account for DMV stop removal fees or any other collection fees
- Calculate and post penalties (one time) and interest (monthly)
- Utilize barcodes for billing and collections

Ability to expand software package at a later date to include:

General Ledger/Budgetary Accounting – Any proposed budgetary accounting package should be able to handle fund accounting with centralized cash management. The Town currently maintains numerous funds with separate income sheet/balance sheet/budgetary tracking reports. Software should comply

with standards issued by the State Auditor of Public Accounts.

Accounts Payable – Any accounts payable accounting package should contain vendor history reporting capabilities, check printing capabilities, automatic posting to the proposed budgetary accounting unit, and other normal invoice processing features.

Payroll – Any payroll package should be able to distribute personnel costs among different funds, print checks based on input time sheets, and provide the usual range of personnel reports. The payroll system should support the Town’s “Section 125” deferred compensation, payroll deduction, and pretax medical/dependent care programs and be fully compatible with Virginia law.

Utility Billing – Any utility billing program should be able to handle rate billing for water (gallons), sewer (gallons), refuse collection (flat rate), sprinkler service (flat rate), billings on one bill. The Town currently uses postcard-type billings and should be able to show at least 6 line items; billings are sent to all customers every month. The vendor should provide a sample of the utility bill that would be offered under this scenario. The Town has approximately 1,100 utility customers. The Town currently utilizes one Sensus handheld device for meter reading. Software should have the ability to utilize barcodes for billing and collections.

Other Options – The Town will consider other modules such as a central cash receipts/collections system in order to assist with all types of collections.

HARDWARE

Since hardware may be purchased via a separate procurement process, vendors should provide a listing of hardware required for the programs offered in a clear and itemized format to support a separate procurement procedure.

TRAINING AND SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

System Installation – The proposing vendor should describe the system installation procedure proposed. The vendor will be expected to adhere to an agreed-upon schedule for this work with penalties for late installation.

Staff Training – Any recommended need for staff training should be explained and an itemized cost provided.

Backup System- Development, installing and training for an up to date backup system should be described in the proposal.

System Maintenance – The proposing vendor’s system maintenance plan should be explained in detail with itemized costs provided.

System Updates – The proposing vendor plan for system updates should be explained in detail with regards to how often and how they are done.

Town of Amherst

Computer Hardware/Software Proposal Cover Sheet

Contact Information			
Proposing Company			
Contact Person			
Contact Person's Title			
Contact Person's Telephone #		Contact Person's Fax #	
Contact Person's Address			
Contact Person's Email			

Installer's Name			
Installer's Telephone #		Installer's Fax #	
Installer's Address			
Installer's Email			

References:	Reference #1	Reference #2	Reference #3
Name			
Company			
Telephone Number			
Address			
Name			
Company			
Telephone Number			
Address			
Name			
Company			
Telephone Number			
Address			

Brief Summary of Proposal			

My signature certifies that the proposal as submitted complies with all terms and conditions as set forth in the request for proposals listed above. My signature also certifies that the accompanying proposal is not the result of, or affected by, any unlawful act of collusion with another person or company engaged in the same line of business or commerce, or any act of fraud punishable under Title 18.2, Chapter 12, Article 1.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended. Furthermore, I understand that fraud and unlawful collusion are crimes under the Virginia Governmental Frauds Act, the Virginia Government Bid Rigging Act, and Virginia Antitrust Act, and Federal Law, and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards. My signature also certifies that this firm has no business or personal relationships with other companies or persons that could be considered as a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest to the Town of Amherst, and that there are no principals, officers, agents, employees, or representatives of this firm that have any business or personal relationships with any other companies or persons that could be considered as a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest to the Town of Amherst, pertaining to any and all work or services to be performed as a result of this request and any resulting contract with the Town of Amherst. I certify that I

	Signature		
	Date		